

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently amended) A composition comprising:  
water;  
a corn hemicellulose in solution in said water; and  
a surfactant, said surfactant being present in an amount effective to reduce the viscosity of said solution.
2. (Original) A composition according to claim 1, said solution further including an amount of chloride salt effective to enhance the hygroscopicity of said solution.
3. (Original) A composition according to claim 1, further comprising a crosslinking agent in an amount effective to enhance the water resistance of said composition.
4. (Original) A composition according to claim 1, further comprising a lignin compound.
5. (Original) A composition comprising:  
water;  
a hemicellulose in solution in said water; and  
a crosslinking agent, said crosslinking agent being present in an amount effective to enhance the water resistance of said composition.
6. (Original) A composition according to claim 5, further comprising a chloride salt, said chloride salt being present in an amount effective to increase the hygroscopicity of said solution.

7-23. Canceled.

24. (New) A composition according to claim 1, said corn hemicellulose comprising hemicellulose obtained by alkaline hydrolysis of corn hulls.

25. (New) A composition according to claim 5, said hemicellulose comprising corn hemicellulose.

26. (New) A composition according to claim 25, said hemicellulose being derived from alkaline cooking of corn hulls.